

Message Text

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70

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01

SPC-03 NSC-10 SS-20 L-03 IO-14 AF-10 ARA-16 EUR-25

NEA-10 NIC-01 OMB-01 DRC-01 /178 W

----- 119613

R 310015Z OCT 73

FM AMCONSUL SYDNEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4944

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMCONSUL BRISBANE

AMCONSUL PERTH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SYDNEY 2505

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, OCON, AS

SUBJ: SOUTH PACIFIC LABOUR MINISTERS CONFERENCE:

FIRST DAY, OCTOBER 30

1. AUSTRALIAN MINISTER OF LABOUR CLYDE CAMERON WAS ELECTED CHAIRMAN AND GAVE OPENING ADDRESS OF CONFERENCE OCT 30, IN STYLISH BUT EFFICIENT MEETING ROOM OF SYDNEY'S TOP LUXURY HOTEL. ALL INVITEES, WITH EXCEPTION OF SAMOA'S WILLIAM ROBERTS, ARRIVED IN TIME FOR OPENING.

2. CAMERON WAS USUAL FORTHRIGHT SELF, OBVIOUSLY MADE GREAT ATTEMPT TO AVOID PATERNALISTIC APPROACH AND NEARLY SUCCEEDED. HE MADE SEVERAL EXCURSIONS FROM PREPARED TEXT, IN ONE OF WHICH HE VIRTUALLY SOUGHT FROM ISLANDERS INVITATION FOR PRESTIGIOUS AUSTRALIANS, SUCH AS ARBITRATION COURT PRESIDENT JOHN MOORE, TO VISIT ISLANDS SOON TO SHARE AUSTRALIAN EXPERTISE.

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3. CAMERON'S SPEECH WAS FIRST MAJOR PART OF TIGHT

SCENARIO WHICH LEFT MAJORITY UNEASY AND NOT REASSURED ABOUT INTENT OF ORGANIZERS. DELEGATES FROM GUAM AND MICRONESIA TOLD LABATT, "EVERYBODY IS MAKING SPEECHES; NOBODY IS TALKING."

4. FIRST AGENDA ITEM WAS "INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS", WHICH ESTABLISHED DIVISION BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND UNDER-DEVELOPED CONFEREES. BADLY PREPARED DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER HUGH WATT OF NEW ZEALAND, WHO IS ALSO MINISTER LABOUR, GAVE SPEECH WHICH EMPHASIZED THE DIFFERENCE, AND SHOWED HOW LITTLE HIS COUNTRY UNDERSTANDS PROBLEMS OF LITTLE NEIGHBORS. HIS OFFER OF SOPHISTICATED NEW ZEALAND INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM AND LAW AS MODEL FOR CONFERENCE, BROUGHT FORTH MILD BUT FIRM REMINDER FROM COOK ISLAND PREMIER ALBERT HENRY THAT NOT ALL ISLANDS COULD USE SUCH DEVICES IN THEIR UNCOMPLICATED SOCIETIES. HE, AND OTHERS, SAID IMMEDIATE NEEDS WERE ECONOMIC, WITH AID TO BE OFFERED WITH REGARD FOR SIMPLE DEMANDS OF TRADITIONAL SYSTEMS.

5. PAPUA NEW GUINEA MINISTER LABOUR GAVERA REA WAS FIRST TO USE DIRTY WORD "COLONIALISM", IN DESCRIBING ACTIVITIES OF AUSTRALIAN TRADE UNIONS, WHICH, UNDER GUISE OF EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE, ACTUALLY ENCOURAGED PNG WORKERS TO ATTAIN AUSTRALIAN WAGE LEVELS FAR ABOVE PNG ABILITY TO PAY. SUCH TACTICS, REA LATER TOLD LABATT, MIGHT BE GOOD FOR ORGANIZING BUT THEY WERE NOT REALISTIC AND MADE WORKERS NEEDLESSLY UNHAPPY. NABOUA RATIETA, MINISTER FROM GILBERT ISLANDS, GAVE SIMILAR ACCOUNT OF STRIKE IN HIS COUNTRY, ENCOURAGED BY OUTSIDERS, WHEN STRIKERS SO POORLY PREPARED THEY WERE SHOCKED TO LEARN THEIR PAY STOPPED DURING STRIKE.

6. COMMENT: CONFERENCE IS OVER ORGANIZED. IN SPITE OF BEST EFFORT, COORDINATION BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND IS OBVIOUS AND EMPHASIZES POOR POSITION OF ISLANDERS. MANY ISLAND DELEGATES WERE EDUCATED IN AUSTRALIA OR NEW ZEALAND, BUT LOYALTIES ARE HERE BEING STRAINED AS IT BECOMES APPARENT THAT TWO BIG COUNTRIES THINK THEY HAVE NO REAL PROBLEM EXCEPT EXISTENCE OF SMALL COUNTRIES NEARBY. WITHOUT ANY DISCUSSION, AUSTRALIAN DEPT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF LABOUR OFFICIAL HAS ASSUMED ROLE OF CONFERENCE "SECRETARY GENERAL" AND HE IS REFERRED TO AS SUCH THROUGHOUT PROCEEDINGS. OFFICIAL, DEREK VOLKER, TOLD LABATT HE IS WORRIED BY INSISTENCE OF GUAM DELEGATE J. GUERRO, THAT ALL DISCUSSION END IN RESOLUTIONS TO GIVE SENSE OF CONFERENCE ON AGENDA ITEMS. IT IS EVIDENT AUSTRALIAN NOT ANXIOUS TO BECOME THIS COMMITTED BEYOND ITS PRE-CONFERENCE DECISIONS IN SELECTED AREAS. HANNAH

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